

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

*This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:*

1. (Currently Amended) A nitrided stainless steel comprising a composition (in weight-%):

Carbon           max 0.1

Nitrogen        max 0.1

Copper          0.5 - 4

Chromium       10 - 14

Molybdenum    0.5 - 6

Nickel          7 - 11

Cobalt          0 - 9

Tantalum       max 0.1

Niobium        max 0.1

Vanadium       max 0.1

Tungsten       max 0.1

Aluminum       0.05 - 0. 6

Titanium        0.4 - 1. 4

Silicon         max 0.7

Manganese       $\leq 1. 0$

Iron            balance and

normally occurring usual steelmaking additions and impurities,

wherein said stainless steel having been ~~[[nitriding]]~~ nitrided to exhibit a hardened surface layer with a hardness of at least 1200 Hv, and

wherein the stainless steel includes quasicrystalline particles in a martensitic microstructure.

Claims 2-6 (Canceled)

7. (Currently Amended) The stainless steel according to claim ~~[[6]]~~ 1, wherein the quasicrystalline particles in the martensitic microstructure are a result of a precipitation hardening process.

8. (Previously Presented) The stainless steel according to claim 1, wherein a hardness at a surface of the stainless steel is at least twice that of a hardness of at 0.5 mm into a matrix of the stainless steel.

9. (Previously Presented) The stainless steel according to claim 1, wherein the hardened surface layer has a thickness of about 0.5 mm.

10. (Previously Presented) The stainless steel according to claim 1, wherein the stainless steel is formed into one or more of a wire, a plate, a strip, tube and a pipe.

11. (Previously Presented) The stainless steel according to claim 1, wherein the stainless steel is formed into a complex geometry for use in an application with a high demand on a combination of high strength and/or toughness and wear resistance.

12. (Previously Presented) The stainless steel according to claim 11, wherein the complex geometry is a wear part of an engine, an engine component, or an impact load.

13. (Previously Presented) The stainless steel according to claim 11, wherein the complex geometry is a cam follower, a cam follower pad, a valve stem, a valve stem guide, a piston pin, a piston shaft, a hydraulic piston, an ejector pin, a safety protection plate, a lock cylinder and other locking devices, a blocking element, or a thief-proof equipment

14. (Previously Presented) A material comprising a wear resistant coating deposited on the stainless steel according to claim 1.

15. (Currently Amended) A method for making a surface modified stainless steel, the method comprising:

subjecting a stainless steel to a nitriding process at a temperature of 450 to 580°C for a time period of 1 to 40 hours in a plasma nitriding atmosphere, the stainless steel having a composition comprising:

Carbon            max 0.1

Nitrogen        max 0.1

Copper           0.5 to 4

Chromium	10 to 14
Molybdenum	0.5 to 6
Nickel	7 to 11
Cobalt	0 to 9
Tantalum	max 0.1
Niobium	max 0.1
Vanadium	max 0.1
Tungsten	max 0.1
Aluminum	0.05 to 0. 6
Titanium	0.4 to 1. 4
Silicon	max 0.7
Manganese	$\leq 1. 0$
Iron	balance and

normally occurring usual steelmaking additions and impurities,

wherein the stainless steel includes quasicrystalline particles in a martensitic microstructure.

16. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 15, wherein said stainless steel after nitriding exhibits a hardened surface layer with a hardness of at least 1200 Hv.

17. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 15, wherein the surface modified stainless steel does not change dimension from the nitriding process.